



# Indiana State Department of Health

## Long Term Care Newsletter

### ISDH LTC NEWSLETTER

Issue # 08-03

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### In Today's Issue:

- Winter safety advisory
- MRSA task force
- CMS program letters
- CNA registry update
- Pressure ulcer redistribution devices update

## Winter Safety Advisory

### Fire Safety:

Winter is a time of the year when there is a significant risk of fire. The Division of Long term Care will periodically report any fires which have occurred in a facility within the past month. This information is provided to you to alert you to the potential of a fire in any building. Names of the facilities will not be provided.

The following are recent fires in long term care facilities. No residents were harmed as a result of these fires.

1. An exhaust fan in a public restroom overheated and began smoking.
2. Resident placed a kitchen towel on the stove top burner. The burner was on and when towel caught fire, resident reacted by placing towel in waste basket.
3. A belt on the washing machine became hot and melted causing smoke to fill the hallways.
4. Resident placed unknown material in heating unit causing smoke
5. Resident left something flammable on the stove and turned the stove on causing flame and smoke
6. Heater wall unit over heated causing smoke
7. Flame discovered in clothes dryer.

### Space heaters:

The Division of Long Term Care staff has discovered that some facilities are allowing residents to have space heaters in their rooms to supplement the facility's heating system. This is a reminder to all Long Term Care facilities that, per NFPA 18.7.8 and LSC 19.7.8, portable space heating devices are prohibited in all health care occupancies. This means that space heaters are not allowed in any area where residents reside. This includes bedrooms, dining areas, and activity areas. Please ensure that there are no space heaters in resident areas.

### **Hypothermia:**

The recent cold snap has tragically reminded us of the need to protect against hypothermia and frostbite. Almost every year, a resident of a health facility or a senior citizen dies from hypothermia. It occurred this past weekend when a senior citizen locked herself out of her home.

When winter temperatures drop, staying warm and dry can be a challenge. With the cold winter weather already upon us and expected for the days ahead, health care facilities need to ensure the safety of residents and staff during this period. This is a good time to review safety procedure plans and provide additional safety checks. Exposure to the cold can cause life-threatening health conditions in a very short period of time.

Improper use of portable heating equipment can lead to fire or dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. Take precautions to ensure safe heating and check that you have a working carbon monoxide detector.

## **MRSA Task Force**

Reports of community acquired methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus, more commonly known as MRSA, have been widely publicized in recent months and caused some concern for many of you. In light of the heightened awareness, a MRSA Task Force was formed, consisting of local and state health officials as well as various community partners, to provide Indiana communities with the most current MRSA information and the necessary tools to promote hand washing and healthy hygiene.

To educate Indiana residents on how to care for skin infections, the Indiana State Department of Health and the MRSA Task Force developed a "MRSA Resource" packet. It is intended to raise awareness about the important role you and the members of your community play in preventing the spread of MRSA and other infections.

For additional information on MRSA, to include the MRSA resource packet, visit the Indiana State Department of Health Web site at: [www.statehealth.in.gov/healthinfo/mrsa.htm](http://www.statehealth.in.gov/healthinfo/mrsa.htm).

## CMS Program Letters

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) periodically issue survey and certification program letters. The ISDH will attach any new program letters to our newsletters. Since our last mailing, CMS has released two new program letters that affect long term care:

1. The survey and certification program letter [S&C 8-9](#) requires that when a nursing home receives food services from an off-site location, the surveyor must assess whether the facility is compliant with 42 C.F.R. 483.35(j) which states: "a facility must procure food from sources approved or considered satisfactory by Federal, State, or local authorities."
2. The survey and certification program letter [S&C 8-10](#) clarifies the use of interpretive guidance surveyors use in reviewing compliance with the regulatory requirements. Surveyors must cite all deficiencies based on a violation of statutory and/or regulatory requirements.

## Renewing or Checking the Aide Registry

In our last newsletter, we updated you on the release of the new online aide registry system. The system is operating smoothly and quite a few aides have already used the system for renewal of their certification. The new online aide registry system provides online renewal of a registration/certification of an aide. The registry will also allow anyone to check the registration/certification status of an aide for no charge.

We have received reports of difficulty in accessing the Web site with the address that we provided. The Web address that we provided was <https://extranet.in.gov/mylicense/Login.aspx>. That address is a valid address and takes you directly to the renewal portion of the system.

It may be easier for you to access the system using the following address -<https://www.in.gov/pla/express>. This is a different web address than what has been previously announced and should be an easier one to use. This web address takes you to a page that will give you the choice of renewal or searching for information on an aide.

## Pressure Device Distribution Update

The delivery of the pressure redistribution devices has been completed. Hill-Rom reports that all of the Hill-Rom Synergy Air Elite Mattresses were shipped to each nursing home by December 30, 2007. Nursing homes should by now have received those mattresses. With an order and shipment of this size going to 517 different places, there were bound to be a few glitches. The wrong blower was sent to four or five facilities and a couple of facilities received a double shipment. We believe problems have been resolved and all facilities should be in possession of (and hopefully using) their new mattress. If you need training on the mattress or have questions, please contact Hill-Rom's account manager Stacy George at 1-800-433-6245, ext. 3134 or [stacy.george@hill-rom.com](mailto:stacy.george@hill-rom.com).

EHOB reports that all EHOB 200 WCI wheelchair cushions were shipped as of January 15, 2008. All facilities should have received these cushions. We are not aware of any problems with these deliveries. If there are any questions about these products, please contact Kurt Veters, EHOB, at (317) 847-6341.

We have received numerous comments about the products. We are aware that many facilities are already using the products. We appreciate the many positive comments on this initiative. In the next newsletter I am planning on reviewing the initiative and doing a question and answer section on the purchases to address many of the questions and comments that we have received.



### **INShape Indiana's 10 in 10 Challenge** **Work Healthy Live Healthy**

Beginning January 7, 2008 INShape Indiana launched its 10 in 10 Challenge. This year we are encouraging those who need to lose weight to lose 10 pounds in 10 weeks through a combination of sound nutrition and physical activity. We are expanding our focus to the workplace and asking you to consider your food and activity options at your place of employment. INShape Indiana will be with you every step of the way providing you with weekly emails highlighting healthy eating habits, tips to increase physical activity, and workplace wellness ideas. [Click here to sign up](#), and make 2008 your year to work healthy and live healthy with INShape Indiana.

INShape Indiana has information on nutrition, physical activity, smoking cessation, workplace wellness, family wellness, and older adult health. The INShape Indiana Web site is located at <http://www.in.gov/inshape/index.htm>.

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That is all for this week. Best wishes for the coming week.

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